

Regional Planning Commissions



Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

**Revision
Presented to the
Local Government
Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of Regional Planning Commissions

Sources of Information

- Alabama Association of Regional Councils' website and individual commission websites
- Alabama Department of Senior Services
- "Alabama Association of Regional Councils" (informational brochure, reprinted 1992)
- *Alabama Government Manual*, 10th Edition (1998)
- Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-1 through 11-85-73, § 22-27-46
- Records Disposition Authority for the Central Alabama Aging Consortium (1999)
- Representatives of the Regional Planning Commissions

Historical Context

As long ago as 1935, Alabama's legislature empowered the governor – if requested by a municipal planning commission, county commission, or petition by 100 citizens – to establish “a region for planning purposes and... a regional planning commission for such region.” Each commission would promote the “coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development” of all local governments within its region. It was authorized to create “a master regional plan for physical development,” taking account of changing governmental boundaries; population shifts; agrarian and industrial growth; the location of streets, parks, buildings, and utilities; and other factors “which affect more than one political subdivision... within the region” (Alabama Act 1935-534; see the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-1 through -7).

Subsequent legislation in 1963, 1969, and 1973 (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-20 through -59) extended the powers of commissions, allowing them to contract with federal and private sources of financial aid and to suggest “regulatory or administrative measures” for regions “where rapid urbanization has occurred or is expected to occur...” These acts also refined procedures for creating regional planning commissions and authorized them to adjust their boundaries. In 1985, the 12 commissions then in existence were “ratified and confirmed” as “regional planning and development commissions” under Alabama law (Alabama Act 85-757; Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-70). Since then, their number and organization have not changed, but a 1994 amendment authorized the commissions to use “whatever method deemed appropriate” in promoting their regions’ “industrial and economic growth” (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-56).

Agency Organization

Under legislation passed in 1969 and 1973 (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-51 and -52), counties and municipalities within a region (which usually consists of three or more counties) may petition the governor to establish a regional planning commission. The statutes also provide for creating a region from a single county “having a population between 93,000 and 100,000 persons,” or even for including territory from another state. However, such arrangements are so

far purely theoretical. The smallest regional planning commission now in existence, the Lee-Russell Council of Governments (*Region 10*), encompasses two counties. The others are, by region:

- *Region 1:* Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments (Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Marion, and Winston Counties)
- *Region 2:* West Alabama Regional Commission (Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa Counties)
- *Region 3:* Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, St. Clair, Shelby, and Walker Counties)
- *Region 4:* East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties)
- *Region 5:* South Central Alabama Development Commission (Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery¹, and Pike Counties)
- *Region 6:* Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission (Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Marengo, Monroe, Perry, Sumter, Washington, and Wilcox Counties)
- *Region 7:* Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry, and Houston Counties)
- *Region 8:* South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (Baldwin, Escambia, and Mobile Counties)
- *Region 9:* Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (Autauga, Elmore, and Montgomery Counties)
- *Region 11:* North-Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties)
- *Region 12:* Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison, and Marshall Counties)

Under their original 1935 legislation (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-2), regional planning commissions “shall consist of nine persons” appointed by the governor for staggered, six-year terms. Later acts provided that “at least a majority... shall be elected public officials of the participating governmental units.” All counties and municipalities within a region must be represented, although “smaller governmental units may select a common representative” and larger units may have more than one (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-53). Each commission elects a chairman and may also elect an executive committee and other officers. It appoints an executive director and hires staff to manage its day-to-day affairs. The exact structure and composition of regional planning commissions vary according to their individual bylaws. “Some have been established as statutory nonprofit corporations, some by resolutions of local government, others by agreements and/or compacts between local governments... Financing is through one, or a combination of, state, local, federal, or private sources” (*Alabama Government Manual*, p. 547).

Note: Although the 12 modern commissions are variously called “regional planning commissions,” “regional planning and development commissions,” or “regional councils of

¹ Montgomery County is included in this region only for environmental development projects.

government,” they will be referred to generically as “regional planning commissions” in this document. The Alabama Association of Regional Councils represents all 12.

Agency Functions and Subfunctions

The mandated function of each regional planning commission is to “carry on continuous, comprehensive planning” in order to guide its region’s “physical, economic, and human resource development” (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-85-56). Although they “frequently deal with issues... which cross city, town, county, and, in some instances, state boundaries... [t]heir activities are directed in response to local needs” (AARC brochure, p. 1). Regional planning commissions are involved primarily in the Economic and Community Development and Public Services functions of Alabama local government.

In performing their mandated functions, regional planning commissions may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Conducting Regional and Statewide Planning.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975, each commission is mandated to “prepare a regional plan consistent with state comprehensive planning.” The plan outlines policies on such matters as changing patterns of urbanization; the use of land for commerce, industry, recreation, transportation, forestry, or agriculture; and the development of human resources. Counties and municipalities follow the regional plan in coordinating ideas for waterways, highways, infrastructures, and other multi-jurisdictional entities. State agencies (such as the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs) may utilize regional plans and commissions in developing or coordinating statewide programs, or for gathering information from local governments regarding statewide needs.
- **Assisting Local Governments with Planning.** Regional planning commissions maintain files of zoning cases, site plans and subdivision plat reviews, and plan updates for use by local governments. Commission staff members offer advice and technical assistance to planning commissions, zoning boards of adjustment, and other local agencies on such projects as annexations, downtown revitalization, industrial parks, historic buildings, and utilization of public space. Five of the commissions operate Geographic Information Systems for their counties and municipalities. Commissions also coordinate with planning and development bodies in adjacent communities, nearby regions, or elsewhere in the state.
- **Assisting with Economic and Community Development.** Regional planning commissions help with community development by planning and implementing projects to improve living conditions, rehabilitate homes, eradicate slums and urban blight, develop housing opportunities, and provide basic facilities and services. They offer economic development assistance with promoting tourism, fostering industrial development, increasing commercial vitality, and enhancing a community or region’s economic vitality and growth. However, the commissions’ primary service in this area is to help local governments obtain federal, state, or private grants. They act as “pass-

through” agencies for funds from the Economic Development Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Agriculture, or other federal agencies that assist community development. They also write or review grant applications submitted by individual localities. Several have initiated Revolving Loan Funds for new or expanding local businesses, as well as other types of loans.

- **Assisting with Community and Human Services.** Regional planning commissions assist counties and municipalities with a broad spectrum of community outreach programs, many of which target senior citizens or children. There are a number of specific services in which one or more commissions are involved.

Providing Assistance to the Aging. Nine of the 12 regional planning commissions serve as area councils on aging. Their services to the elderly (usually conducted through local non-profit agencies, volunteers, or vendors) include:

- Operating senior centers that provide hot, nutritious meals, health and welfare programs, and recreational and social opportunities;
- Providing transportation to nutrition centers, medical facilities, grocery stores, and other necessary destinations;
- Supporting senior citizen discount programs;
- Providing social services, including counseling, case work, and referrals;
- Offering home health services through the Medicaid Waiver Program;
- Providing funding for in-home services, such as house cleaning, escorted shopping, daily telephone reassurance, and legal consultation;
- Employing federal funds to help train seniors for new employment opportunities;
- Investigating complaints about residential health care facilities.

Regional planning commissions that serve as area councils on aging are subject to oversight from the Alabama Department of Senior Services.

Operating Public Transit Programs. Several regional planning commissions receive grants through the Alabama Department of Transportation to operate rural and urban public transit programs in their regions, including special services for the elderly or handicapped. Funds are derived from various programs administered by the Federal Transit Administration.

Assisting with Early Childhood Development. The East Alabama Planning and Development Commission conducts an outreach program in early childhood development. Its objective is to provide quality child care before school, during working hours, and after school for children of employed parents. Under supervision by the state comptroller’s office, the commission acts primarily as a “pass through” agency for funneling state and federal funds to other community agencies that assist children or train educational staff in providing child care. Similarly, the Southeast Alabama Planning and Development Commission operates a Head Start Program, administering federal funds and supervising area centers that offer nutritional, social, and educational services to even younger children (ages three to five).

Microfilming Local Government Records. The East Alabama Planning and Development Commission offers microfilming services to counties and municipalities within its region. Although originally grant-funded, records preparation and filming are now provided on a commercial basis. The commission has generally followed ANSI/AIIM microfilming standards and consulted Government Records Division staff regarding records retention requirements for Alabama's local governments.

Providing Educational Court Referral Programs. The Administrative Office of Courts has certified the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments to administer the Court Referral Program in Colbert, Franklin, and Lauderdale Counties. The council works with local court systems to provide educational court referral programs designed to reduce the frequency of traffic offenses. Records for this program are handled through the Administrative Office of Courts (AOC) and are therefore not included in this RDA.

All regional planning commissions cooperate with federal, state, and local agencies that provide partnership opportunities for community development, such as the United States Department of Agriculture (which offers loans for small business expansion or rural development), the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. Others work on a regional level with the Vietnam Veterans, Green Thumb, Senior AIDES, or Headstart to assist various special-needs groups in their communities.

- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the regional planning commissions' activities include general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support their programmatic areas. Categories under this subfunction may include:

Managing the agency. Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies, such as corresponding and communicating; scheduling; meeting; documenting policy and procedures; reporting; litigating; drafting, promoting, or tracking legislation; publicizing and providing information; managing records; and managing information systems and technology.

Managing finances. Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing a budget package); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, accounting for expenditures, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; assisting in the audit process; investing; and issuing bonds.

Managing human resources. Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill vacant positions within the agency; providing compensation to

employees; providing benefits to employees, such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, promoting, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education to employees; and disciplining.

Managing properties, facilities, and resources. Activities include inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; constructing buildings and facilities; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property owned by the agency; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Records Appraisal of Regional Planning Commissions

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by Regional Planning Commissions: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

Temporary Records

Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by the board are discussed below:

- **Records Management Documentation – Records request forms.** The courts, in *Blankenship v. City of Hoover* (590 So2d 245 [Ala. 1991]), have established that local government agencies may ask visitors who wish to examine records to complete an identification form before permitting access. Typically, these forms contain such information as the visitor's name and contact information, the date and time of the request, the records requested, the reason for requesting access, and staff comments. Although such information may not be cited as a reason for denying access, the forms have value in discouraging records' theft or damage by documenting who has used them. The ADAH recommends the use of records request forms as one component of an agency's records access policy. The proposed disposition assumes the records will be auditable, like others covered in this item. As always, any forms involved in litigation or criminal charges arising from records access issues should be retained until conclusion of the case.
- **Records of Formal Bids.** These records document the bid process, which is subject to the requirements of Title 41, Chapter 16, Article 3 of the Code of Alabama 1975. In this revision of the RDA, records documenting individual bid projects retain the 7-year retention period mandated by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-54(e). Records proposed for addition include lists of eligible bidders maintained by the commission and correspondence with bidders slated for removal from the eligible list. Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-54(a), a bidder who fails to respond to three bid solicitations may be dropped. The change proposed would allow regional planning commissions to dispose of correspondence related to this process, as well as their outdated lists of vendors.
- **Facilities/Buildings Security Records.** These records document the commission's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of visitors to these areas. They include security monitoring and response recordings. The proposed disposition allows the original recordings to be routinely recycled every 30 days, after sections pertaining to incidents likely to result in criminal charges or litigation have been copied. The resulting copies must be retained, like similar records in other jurisdictions, until the final disposition of cases for which they provide evidence. Other security-related records have a three-year retention period.

Permanent Records

The Archives Division recommends the following records as permanent:

Conducting Regional and Statewide Planning

- **Regional Advisory Plans.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975, each commission is mandated to “prepare a regional plan consistent with state comprehensive planning.” These plans set forth commission policies on such matters as changing patterns of urbanization; the use of land for commerce, industry, recreation, transportation, forestry, or agriculture; and the development of human resources. The records therefore provide essential primary documentation of the commission’s planning activities in fulfilling its legislative mandate and cooperating with state and local authorities in regional development. **(Bibliographic Title: Regional Advisory Plans)**

Assisting Local Governments with Planning

- **Final Plans and Reports.** These records document commissions’ planning assistance to local governments within their region. Plans and reports are generated for annexation studies, downtown revitalization projects, industrial sites or parks, historic building inventories, space utilization in public facilities, or similar projects. Information in the files may include maps, population statistics, drawings, and floor plans. Plans and reports provide primary documentation of commission planning activities. They contain detailed information on the region’s cities and counties that may be utilized for research purposes. **(Bibliographic Title: Final Plans and Reports)**

Assisting with Economic and Community Development

Permanent documentation of this sub function is found in regional planning commissions’ board minutes and annual reports, and in grant files maintained by local governments.

Assisting with Community and Human Services

- **Area Plans.** Regional planning commissions that serve as area councils on aging are responsible for developing uniform area plans (Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 70-X-3). During the years it covers, an area plan provides a blueprint for all aspects of the council on aging’s operations. It may be amended with concurrence from the state Department of Senior Services. Permanent retention of these records is essential to show the development and implementation of federal and state policy toward Alabama’s aging population. **(Bibliographic Title: Area Plans for the Aging)**

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

- **Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records are meeting and hearing minutes of the board, along with agendas and packet materials (drafts,

budgets, reports, work plans, exhibits, or other background materials) reviewed by board members during meetings. They are essential to document the evolution of regional planning commission policies and procedures as approved by the board. **(Bibliographic Title: Minutes)**

- **Administrative Policies and Procedures (including bylaws).** These records document the regional planning commission's mandates, goals, administrative policies, and staff procedures, as set forth in its bylaws and decisions by the board. As each regional planning commission is different, the information in bylaws is not duplicated elsewhere. **(Bibliographic Title: Policies and Procedures)**
- **Administrative Correspondence.** These records include correspondence and related files by board members, the executive director, or other administrative officers concerning commission policies and procedures, as well as broad questions of administration. They may include correspondence with federal, state, or local agencies involved in the commission's work. Administrative correspondence documents the impact of agency decision-makers on policy development.
- **Publicity and Informational Materials.** These records may include videotapes, audiotapes, newsletters, or public service announcements designed to publicize the regional planning commission's programs or particular events. They are especially useful in understanding how the agency views its activities and its efforts to communicate information about them to the public. **(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)**
- **Agency Historical Files.** These files may be maintained by the regional planning commission to document its history. They may contain scrapbooks, ledgers or volumes, director's speeches, or newspaper clipping files pertaining to important events in the commission's history.
- **Annual Reports.** Regional planning commissions may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing their activities during a calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of agency functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of commission operations. **(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)**

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

- **Budgeting Records – Approved Annual Budgets and Annual Financial Reports.** These records document preparing an agency budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting budget performance. Permanent items include copies of final annual budgets, as approved by the commission board, and annual financial reports.
- **Audit Reports.** Regional planning commission audits are performed by auditors from the Examiners of Public Accounts who are assigned to local governments. It is important that

these audits be maintained permanently at the local level to provide financial accountability to the regional area that the planning commission serves.

- **General Ledgers and Detailed Year-End Trial Balances – records created since 1975.** The general ledger is the record of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting fees and other revenue, purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting. Originally, general ledgers were created manually and were appraised as permanent. These records and another financial summary, the detailed year-end trial balance, are now often electronically created. This revision of the RDA limits permanent retention to general ledgers and trial balances created before 1975. Later records retain the 10-year period previously approved for those in electronic format. Annual financial reports and audit reports provide permanent documentation of commission financial practices.
- **Grant Project Files: Final Narrative Reports.** These records document the commission's application for federal, state, or private funds to purchase items or materials, construct facilities, or carry out programs. Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished. These records do *not* relate to the commission's work in obtaining grants for other agencies within its region. **(Bibliographic Title: Grant Project Files – Final Narrative Reports)**

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

- **Job Classification and Pay Plans.** These records document the various job classifications used by the regional planning commission. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each employment position. As the most complete record of job classifications, they provide a profile of commission personnel policies over time.
- **Employee Handbooks.** Employee handbooks provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other regional planning commission policies and procedures. They serve as evidence of compliance with state and federal hiring practices and may be used in personnel-related litigation. **(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)**
- **Employee Newsletters.** Employee newsletters offer a narrative of regional planning commission employment policies, employee programs and benefits, and information on individual employees. Along with employee handbooks, they are primary documentation of the agency's human resources management. **(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)**
- **“Drug Free Workplace” Records.** This is a new series, first scheduled in the municipal RDA, but created by many local government agencies. The records document agency substance abuse policies and training, as well as drug and alcohol testing of employees. Under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in employee personnel files. The proposed disposition is generally based on 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). Under federal requirements, training records,

testing records, and medical information (drug treatment referrals) are all short-term. However, agency policies and procedures on drug and alcohol abuse are scheduled here as permanent, like other policy-related records.

- **Training Records – Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.**
These records document the regional commission's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or other publications. Like other administrative policies and procedures, they are appraised as permanent. Documentation of employee training standards may also be needed to demonstrate that employees received adequate training in performing their job responsibilities.

Permanent Records List Regional Planning Commissions

Conducting Regional and Statewide Planning

1. Regional Advisory Plans

Assisting Local Governments with Planning

1. Final Plans and Reports

Assisting with Community and Human Services

1. Area Plans

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

1. Board Minutes, Hearing Agendas, and Packets
2. Administrative Policies and Procedures (including bylaws)
3. Administrative Correspondence
4. Publicity and Informational Materials*
5. Agency Historical Files*
6. Annual Reports*

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

1. Budgeting Records: Approved Annual Budgets and Annual Financial Reports*
2. Audit Reports*
3. General Ledgers and Detailed Year-End Trial Balances – Records created prior to 1975
4. Grant Project Files: Final Narrative Reports

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

1. Job Classification and Pay Plans
2. Employee Handbooks
3. Employee Newsletters
4. “Drug-Free Workplace” Records – Policies and Procedures*
5. Training Records – Training Standards, Policies, Procedures, and Publications*

* Indicates records that will remain in the care and custody of the regional planning commissions. ADAH staff members are available to work with agency staff in determining the best location and storage conditions for the long-term care and maintenance of permanent records.

Regional Planning Commissions Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through 24. It was compiled by the Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the Commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Regional Planning Commissions. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes minimum retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and may be made available to members of the public. Records also must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the agency records manager or ADAH Archives Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

The RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the agency from creation to dissolution. Please contact the staff of the Department of Archives and History before destroying any records created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of the records created by the Agency. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-like materials are not actually regarded as official records and may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document agency activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to,

telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value, copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business, and internal communications about social activities; (5) honorary materials, plaques, awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by the agency staff. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Agency and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The Agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the Local Government Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

Conducting Regional and Statewide Planning

1.01 Regional Advisory Plans. These plans set forth the commission's policies for developing the region in accordance with its present and future needs and resources. They outline policy on such matters as changing patterns of urbanization; the use of land for commerce, industry, recreation, transportation, forestry, or agriculture; and the development of human resources. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Assisting Local Governments With Planning

2.01 Final Plans and Reports. These records document the commission's planning assistance to local governments within its region. Plans and reports are generated for annexation studies, downtown revitalization projects, industrial sites or parks, historic building inventories, space utilization in public facilities, or similar projects. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

2.02 Local Government Comprehensive Plan Work Files and Special Project Files. These records document the commission's assistance to counties and municipalities in creating comprehensive local plans and special purpose projects (e.g., zoning or subdivision regulation). They may include records created under the now-defunct federal "701 Program". Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

2.03 Zoning Plans and Zoning Ordinance Work Files. These records document the commission's planning and advisory services to localities in zoning cases, the development of zoning ordinances, and related issues of planning and development. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

2.04 Maps and Mapping Files. These records document the commission's work in providing maps or research to assist its region's localities with geographical surveys, subdivision development, and other activities of civic planning.

- a. **Maps.** These maps are created by commission staff and updated periodically, based on information submitted by the localities they document. They may be either hand-drawn or maintained and updated electronically in the commission's GIS system. "Snapshot" versions of electronic maps may be transferred from the system to CDs or maintained in paper format.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after map is no longer actively updated. Offer to the client local government or to a local library, archives, or historical society before destruction.

- b. **Field Reconnaissance Files.** These records are compiled by commission staff in conducting surveys of land use, soil or water conditions, or other planning issues. Information from the files is used in creating and updating maps.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after map is completed or updated.

- c. **Reference Maps and Files.** These maps are created not by the regional planning commission, but by other federal, state, or local agencies. Examples include flood rate maps from the National Flood Insurance Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and county taxation maps. Reference maps and related information may be used in compiling the commission's own maps or sold to local governments or individuals within the region.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

2.05 Federal Community Records. These records document the activities of a federal program that helps selected communities.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

2.06 Transportation Study Files. These records document the commission's assistance to communities in solving public transportation problems and planning future transportation needs. They may include materials gathered in the process of grant applications.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the program/grant was completed.

2.07 Metropolitan Planning Organization Files. These records document regional meetings of organizations of commission staff and county and municipal officials to consider common transportation needs and problems.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Assisting With Economic and Community Development

3.01 Grant Assistance Files. These records document the commission's assistance to regional localities in applying for federal, state, local, or private grants. They cover grants for which the commission acts as a "pass-through" agency, rather than as the grant recipient. Primary documentation of the grants is retained by the local agencies receiving them.

- a. **Economic Development Administration (EDA) Program Files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after completion of state and federal audits and release of audit reports.
- b. **Community Development Block Grant Planning Files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final federal report or denial of application.
- c. **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Program Files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final federal report or denial of application.
- d. **Other grants (financial records, supporting documentation).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.
- e. **Correspondence documenting intergovernmental grant review.** This correspondence documents the work of intergovernmental grant review, as part of the commission's role as regional "clearinghouse" for federal programs and projects. Commission staff may review federal grant applications for localities within the region, without being further involved in the grant submission process or post-application monitoring of grants.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

3.02 Loan Files. These records document the commission's efforts to assist local entities in its region to obtain various types of loans for economic and community development. They include: Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Files, Intermediary Re-lending Program (IRP) Files, Micro-Loan Files, and similar records documenting loans to local agencies or businesses.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after closure of the file.

Assisting With Community and Human Services

Providing Assistance to the Aging

4.01 Area Plans. Area councils on aging are responsible for developing uniform area plans. During the years it covers, an area plan provides a blueprint for all aspects of the council on aging's operations.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

4.02 Annual Operating Plans. These records offer a more detailed account of program and financial planning on an annual basis.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain through completion of multi-year area plan.

4.03 Program Performance Reports (including Quarterly Financial Reports). These reports provide statistical information for programs administered under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.04 Senior Center Administrative Reports and Forms. These records document routine operations at senior centers within the area council's area. They include reports on weekly activities and meals, daily attendance records, meal vouchers and certifications, service logs, home-delivered meal ratings, meal change requests, and client registration forms.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.05 Service Analysis Reports. These are monthly reports that service providers under contract to the area council submit to document operations at senior centers.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.06 Senior Center and Contractor Evaluations. These records document inspections and evaluations of senior centers and other service providers by council on aging personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

4.07 Legal Assistance Reports, Forms, and Case Files. These records document legal assistance to elderly individuals under the Older Americans Act. They may include participant registration forms, service logs, information on community legal education sessions, and statistics. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Case files.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after verification of client's death or departure from the jurisdiction.

b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.08 Medicaid Waiver Case Management Client Files. These files document counseling and other assistance by the area council's service providers to elderly individuals under the federal Medicaid Wavier Program. Disposition of the records is as follows:

- a. **Case files, correspondence, memoranda.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after verification of client's death or departure from the jurisdiction.
- b. **Other records (time sheets, statements of expenditure, etc.).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.09 Senior AIDES (Alert, Industrious, Dedicated, Energetic Service) Program Files. These records document the regional planning commission's participation in a federally-funded program for assisting qualified senior citizens to find employment. Following the settlement of a longstanding audit dispute with the U.S. Department of Labor, Senior Service America (in a memorandum dated February 13, 2004) authorized the destruction of Senior AIDES records created prior to July 1, 1999. The disposition of Senior AIDES records is therefore revised as follows:

- a. **Records created prior to July 1, 1999.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Destroy.
- b. **Records created after July 1, 1999.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.10 Aging Program Complaint Files. These files document complaints about long-term health care facilities and efforts by community ombudsmen to resolve such complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after final disposition of the case.

4.11 Ombudsman Quarterly Reports. These are cumulative statistical reports submitted by community ombudsmen to the state ombudsman. They contain such information as: number of complaints in specific categories, agent who investigated each complaint, and number of complaints resolved or active.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

4.12 Aging Grantee Community Profiles. These are status reports on the community submitted to council on aging staff and used in the process of grant application.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

4.13 Aging Information Management System (AIMS) Service Logs. These records document the entry of information into the statewide network for area councils on aging maintained by the Alabama Department of Senior Services.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until entered into AIMS and verified.

Operating Public Transit Programs

4.14 Transit Program Administrative Files. These records document the commission's operation of public transit systems in its region's urban or rural areas, as well as transportation services for the elderly or handicapped. Included are such records as copies of annual and quarterly vehicle inspections, and accident reports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Other routine administrative records for this program (such as financial records, personnel records, vehicle maintenance files, and correspondence) are covered in other sections of this RDA.

Assisting with Early Childhood Development

4.15 Child Development Program Annual Operating Plans. These records document the planning of the commission's child development program on annual basis. Submitted to the state comptroller's office, they are primarily financial in nature and include requests for funds.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

4.16 Child Development Program Agreements. These records are service agreements between the commission and agencies within its region that provide childcare and/or educational programs for children.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the agreement.

4.17 Child Development Center Administrative Reports and Forms. These records document routine operations at child development centers in the region. They may include registration and attendance records, meal vouchers, service logs, and reports on meals and activities.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

4.18 Child Development Center Evaluations. These records document onsite inspections and evaluations of child development centers or service providers by regional planning commission staff.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

4.19 Child Development Program Complaint Files. These document complaints about child development centers or service providers and efforts by the commission's board or staff to resolve such complaints.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after final disposition of the case.

4.20 Annual Service Plans. These records are created in the process of annual grant applications to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for Head Start program funding. Thereafter, they provide a blueprint for the program's operation during the year.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of grant application.

4.21 Head Start Center/Service Provider Collaboration Agreements. These records are service contracts or agreements between the commission and local Head Start centers or vendors providing services to children in the region.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the agreement.

4.22 Head Start Center Administrative Files. These records document routine operations at Head Start centers in the region. They may include registration and attendance records, meal vouchers, service logs, and reports on meals and activities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

4.23 Child Nutrition Service Operational Records. These records document the commission's operation of lunchrooms at Head Start Centers in its region. They assist the commission in obtaining reimbursement from the state Department of Education. The records may include policy statements; eligibility statements and applications; food, supply, and equipment inventories; meal count records; reimbursement claims; and nutrition education reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit. All claims and findings must be settled before the records are destroyed.

4.24 Head Start Center/Service Provider Evaluations. These records document inspections and evaluations of Head Start centers or service providers by regional planning commission staff.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

4.25 Head Start Program Complaint Files. These files document complaints about Head Start centers or service providers and efforts by the commission's board or staff to resolve such complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after final disposition of the case.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

5.01 Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records are meeting and hearing minutes of the board, along with agendas and packet materials. They document the evolution of policies and procedures as approved by the board. Packets may include drafts, budgets, reports, work plans, exhibits, or other background materials reviewed by members during meetings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.02 Recordings of Board Meetings. Audio or video recordings provide a verbatim account of discussion at board meetings. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until minutes are approved.

5.03 Administrative Policies and Procedures (including bylaws). These records document the regional planning commission's mandates, goals, administrative policies, and staff procedures, as set forth in its bylaws and decisions by the board.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.04 Administrative Correspondence. These records include correspondence and related files by board members, the executive director, or other administrative officers concerning commission policies and procedures, as well as broad questions of administration. They may include correspondence with federal, state, or local agencies involved in the commission's work.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.05 Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the regional planning commission that are collected and used only as reference sources of information.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain useful life.

5.06 Publicity and Informational Materials. These records may include videotapes, audiotapes, newsletters, or public service announcements designed to publicize the regional planning commission's programs or particular events.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.07 Agency Historical Files. These files may be maintained by the regional planning commission to document its history. They may contain scrapbooks, ledgers or volumes, director's speeches, or newspaper clipping files pertaining to important events in the commission's history.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.08 Annual Reports. Regional planning commissions may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing their activities during a calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of agency functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of commission operations.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

5.09 Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of commission operations in contact with counties or municipalities within its region, other government or funding agencies, local organizations or business, and the general public. Routine correspondence relates to such "everyday" matters as answering inquiries and providing information, rather than to agency policy development or issues long-term administrative.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

5.10 Legal Case Files. These records document lawsuits filed against the regional planning commission.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the case is closed.

5.11 Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses used by agency staff members.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

5.12 Mail, Telephone, and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of telephone and fax machine contacts and related data.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

5.13 Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for agency personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

5.14 Records Management Documentation.

- a. **Records documenting implementation of the agency's approved RDA.** These records include records management plans, records inventories, records finding aids, and records destruction notices.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Copy of approved RDA.** The RDA provides legal guidelines for the disposition of all agency records. The regional planning commission should maintain a signed copy of its RDA and may disperse duplicate copies as needed.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which the RDA is superseded.

- c. **Records request forms.** The regional planning commission may ask visitors wishing to examine records to complete an identification form before providing access. Information in such forms may include visitor's name and contact information, date and time of request, records requested, reason for request, and staff comments.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit or until any resulting litigation is concluded.

5.15 Websites. Regional planning commissions may develop websites for providing information on such matters as staff, programs, services, grant opportunities, and policies.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a complete copy of the website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

5.16 Computer Systems Documentation. These files include hardware and software manuals, diskettes, and warranties.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain former system documentation 2 years following the audit period in which the former hardware and software no longer exist anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

6.01 Budgeting Records. These records document preparing an agency budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.

- a. **Departmental/program area budget estimates and requests.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Approved annual budgets.** These are final budgets as approved by the regional planning commission's board.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- c. **Records documenting budget performance during the budget cycle (budgeted and actual revenue reports, revenue reports, investment reports, encumbrance reports, etc.).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- d. **Annual financial reports.**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

6.02 Audit Reports. These records document the regional planning commission's overall financial condition during each audit period.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

6.03 Accounting Records.

- a. **Routine accounting records.** These are records of original entry for routine accounting transactions, such as journals, registers, ledgers, receipts, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, etc.

Note: Disposition for grant-related accounting records is provided under Grant Project Files.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **General Ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances.** These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue, purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.
 - i. Records created prior to 1975.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
 - ii. Records created in or after 1975.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.

6.04 Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods and services, and authorizing payment for products. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, purchase orders, quotes, invoices, purchasing card receipts, and receiving reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Disposition for grant-related purchasing records is provided under Grant Project Files.

6.05 Contracts Leases, and Agreements. These records document the negotiation, fulfillment, and termination of all contracts, leases, and agreements entered into by the regional planning commission, including final contracts that are subject to the bid process.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-33).

6.06 Records of Formal Bids. These records document the bid process, including the agency's requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses from service vendors.

- a. **Records documenting bids on products or services obtained by the commission.**
These records include requests for bids proposals, successful and unsuccessful bids by product or service vendors, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-62).
- b. **Lists of eligible bidders.** Regional planning commissions may compile lists of persons or businesses who have filed requests to be notified of bids on projects, products, or services required by the commission.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last contact with listed vendors.

Note: Requests from bidders to be included on the list may be treated as Routine Correspondence.

c. **Correspondence with vendors slated for removal from the list of eligible bidders.**

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-52(a), any listed bidder who fails to respond after receiving three solicitations for bids may be stricken from the eligible list. This correspondence documents the commission's efforts to warn unresponsive vendors that they will be dropped from the list unless they ask to remain eligible. It includes forms or letters sent out by the commission and any responses from the vendors.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the bidder is removed from the list.

6.07 Grant Project Files. These records document the agency's application for federal, state, or private funds to purchase items or materials, construct facilities, or carry out programs. They also document the conduct of grant projects and the expenditure of funds, and may include correspondence with the granting agency or parent local government.

(Note: These files do not relate to the commission's work in obtaining grants for other agencies within its region. Such records are covered by Grant Assistance Files.)

a. **Financial reports, narrative reports, and correspondence.** These records include financial reports, interim narrative reports, background materials, and other non-financial supporting documentation for grants awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful applications.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.

b. **Subsidiary financial records.** These records include accounting or purchasing records and any other subsidiary financial documentation of federal grants, excluding financial reports (See Federal Rule 1354).

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.

c. **Final narrative reports.** Final narrative reports are submitted according to requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

6.08 Investment Reports. These records provide summary documentation of the regional planning commission's financial investments.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

6.09 Travel Records. These records document requests by agency personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement forms and itineraries.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

6.10 Employer Tax Returns and Related Files. These records include, but are not limited to, employer state tax returns, federal tax returns, local tax returns, unemployment quarterly reports, and Federal Forms 1099. These records do not pertain to individual employees but instead describe the local government agency as a whole.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

7.01 Job Classification and Pay Plans. These records document the various job classifications used by the commission. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each employment position.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.02 Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the regional planning commission to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the position is filled.

7.03 Employment Applications. These are applications by individuals for employment in agency positions.

a. **Successful applications.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in employee personnel file.

b. **Unsuccessful applications (received in response to specific job announcements).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

c. **Supplemental data forms.** Information on these forms includes the job applicant's name, Social Security number, date of birth, race, gender, and recruitment source. The form may be separated and filed separately from other information on the employment application.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after employee separation or 3 years after an unsuccessful application.

d. **I-9 forms.** These federal forms are used to verify that persons seeking employment are eligible to work in the United States. Disposition of the employing agency's copy is proved by 8 CFR 274a.2.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after employment or 1 year after termination, whichever is longer.

7.04 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Files. These records document commission's compliance with hiring regulations established by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Note: "Whenever a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General – [retain] until final disposition of the charge or action" (29 CFR 1602.31, 1602.20).

7.05 Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.06 Employee Newsletter. Internal newsletters are created for commission employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.07 Employee Personnel Files. These records document each agency employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. A file may include information on an employee's training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and demotions, awards, leave, and salary.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

7.08 Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all agency employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.09 Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of agency personnel, both generally and for individual employees.

- a. **Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets).** These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Employee cumulative leave/attendance records.** These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

- c. **Employee sick leave donation records.** These records document the donation of sick leave to their colleagues by employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.10 Payroll Records. These records document regional planning commission payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees.

- a. **Annual payroll earnings reports/records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes.** These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and federal Form 941.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.
- b. **Records documenting agency payrolls.** These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- c. **Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations.** These records document payroll deductions for taxes (including W-4 forms), retirement and insurance contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
- d. **Records documenting payroll deductions.** These records document taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- e. **Employee "cafeteria plan" (flexible benefits records).** These records document salary-reduction type plans authorized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Section 125.
 - i. General information about the plan.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
 - ii. Employee applications, correspondence, enrollment cards and files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of the plan.

7.11 Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the agency's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health/life insurance programs.

- a. **General information on the program.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
- b. **Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after program termination or employee separation.

c. **Employee claims files.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which the claim was filed.

7.12 Workmen's Compensation Insurance Claim Files. These files document all claims pertaining to work-related injuries or diseases made by agency employees (See the Code of Alabama 1975 § 25-5-4).

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.

7.13 Unemployment Compensation Files. These files provide documentation related to employee claims for unemployment compensation.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which the transaction occurred.

7.14 "Drug-Free Workplace" Records. These records document agency substance abuse policies and programs, as well as drug and alcohol testing of agency employees. Under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in Employee Personnel Files. They are generally governed by the requirements of 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). The types of records to be maintained include:

Training records (drug and alcohol abuse policy statements, names of employees attending training, documentation of training provided to supervisors on detecting and dealing with employee drug abuse)

Records related to the collection process (collection logbooks; documentation of random, pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, or post-accident testing; documentation of employee's inability to provide testable urine samples for medical reasons)

Records related to drug testing (test results, custody and control forms, and documentation of employees' refusal to submit to testing or employee challenges to test results).

Records related to employees' referral to substance abuse recovery programs (referrals by professionals, documentation of program completion, follow-up testing of employees).

Retention periods for "Drug-Free Workplace" records are as follows:

a. **Drug/alcohol abuse policies and procedures documentation.**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Positive employee drug or alcohol test results, documentation of employee refusals to take tests, documentation of employee referrals and treatment in substance abuse programs, copies of agency's annual MIS reports submitted to FTA.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

c. **Records related to the collection process and employee training.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

d. **Negative employee drug or alcohol test results.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

7.15 Employee Assistance Program Files. These are administrative records documenting the referral of employees to various (non-substance abuse related) assistance programs and subsequent services provided.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.16 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the federal Family Medical Leave program, including leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.17 Affordable Care Act Compliance Files. These records encompass the documentation submitted to the federal government to demonstrate compliance with the Affordable Care Act.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission.

7.18 Training Records. These records document the agency's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.** These records document the commission's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed.

b. **Training administrative files.** These records document the process of conducting training for employees. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

7.19 Reports of Employees Required to File Statements of Economic Interest. These records include reports to the Alabama Ethics Commission and related transmittals, copies of statements, and correspondence pertaining to the filing of Statements of Economic Interest by employees. The reports contain the names of commission employees who are required to file Statements of Economic Interest.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

8.01 Space Management Plans/Records of Space Assignments. These records document the assignment of office space in agency buildings and facilities. They include operating plans for the assignment of such space.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded or no longer useful.

8.02 Insurance Policies and Claims.

- a. **Insurance policies.** These policies document all insurance policies carried by the agency. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the policy was terminated.
- b. **Insurance claims.** These records document insurance claims filed by the local government agency. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was settled.
- c. **Certificates of liability.** These records provide proof of insurance. Certificates are typically valid for a period of one year or less. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

8.03 Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay by the regional planning commission on an annual basis.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

8.04 Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document the temporary use or possession of the agency's property by its employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

8.05 Facilities/Building Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in agency buildings and facilities.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

8.06 Facilities/Building Inspection Records. These records document the routine safety and maintenance inspection of agency buildings and facilities, and such potentially dangerous items as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

8.07 Facilities/Buildings Security Records. These records document the commission's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of visitors to these areas. They may include visitors' logs or sign-in sheets, alarm system logs, recordings of security monitoring or response, and any other records documenting security staff's response to alarms or emergencies.

a. **Security monitoring or response recordings.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 30 days or until final disposition of any criminal cases or litigation for which recordings provide evidence.

b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

8.08 Facilities/Buildings Safety Plans and Training Files.

a. **Safety plans.** These records document the manner in which agency staff are directed to respond in emergencies. Examples of safety plans include, but are not limited to, fire evacuation protocols, severe weather plans, and active shooter protocols.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

b. **Training files.** These records document the training and practice undertaken by staff to implement safety plans. Examples of training and practice include, but are not limited to, fire drills, tornado drills, and bomb threat drills.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

8.09 Motor Pool Use Records. These records document the use of motor pool vehicles by agency employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

8.10 Parking Records. These records document the use of the agency parking facilities by employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

8.11 Vehicle and Equipment Ownership and Maintenance Files. These records document the ownership and maintenance of all vehicles and other equipment owned or maintained by the commission. They may include titles, bills of sale, repair records, and related correspondence.

a. **Ownership records (titles, bills of sale, etc.).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which equipment or vehicle is removed from inventory.

b. **Maintenance files (work orders, repair records, and related financial records).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

8.12 Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the agency's long-distance telephone systems by employees during business hours.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority for Regional Planning Commissions

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-23, “no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any. . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission.” This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission’s staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record.

Recommendations

In addition, the Agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program by conducting the following activities:

The Agency should designate a staff member in a managerial position as its records liaison/records manager, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency’s approved RDA.

Permanent records in the Agency’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail contains permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA’s requirements, the

office should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the Agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Agency records managers and/or the ADAH archivists are available to instruct the staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the Agency in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this revised Records Disposition Authority on October 28, 2020.

Steve Murray, Chairman
Local Government Records Commission

Date

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

Executive Director

Date

Name of Regional Planning Commission

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